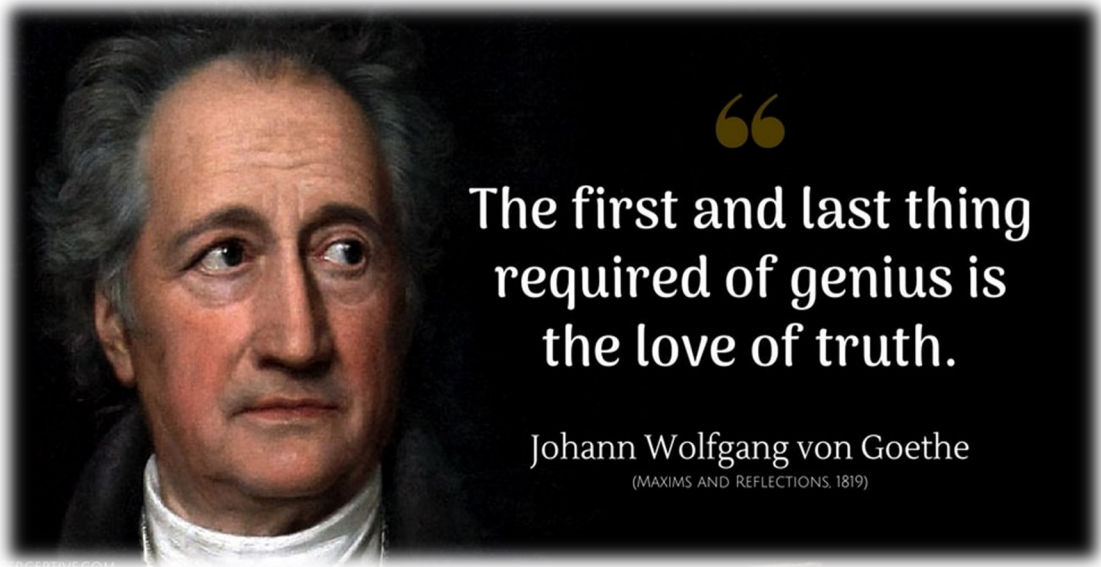


108
Greatest Of All Times



Globally selected
Personalities



28 Aug 1749 <::><::><::> 22 Mar 1832

ISBN:978-81-981942-2-0

Compiled by:
Prof Dr S Ramalingam



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28 Aug 1749



22 Mar 1832


[Geheimrat](#)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



Goethe in 1828, by [Joseph Karl Stieler](#)

Born	Johann Wolfgang Goethe 28 August 1749 <u>Frankfurt</u> , <u>Holy Roman Empire</u>
Died	22 March 1832 (aged 82) <u>Weimar</u> , <u>Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach</u>
Occupation	Poet, novelist, playwright, <u>natural philosopher</u> , statesman
Language	German
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Leipzig University</u>• <u>University of Strasbourg</u>
Genres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fiction (poetry• novel• <u>romance</u>• drama)• non-fiction (<u>aesthetic criticism</u>• <u>treatise</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • article • autobiography • oration • correspondence)
Literary movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sturm und Drang • Weimar Classicism • Romanticism in science
Years active	From 1770
Notable works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faust • The Sorrows of Young Werther • Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship • Elective Affinities • "Prometheus" • Zur Farbenlehre • Italienische Reise • West-östlicher Divan
Spouse	Christiane Vulpius
	(m. 1806; died 1816)
Children	5, including 4 who died young and August von Goethe
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johann Caspar Goethe • Catharina Elisabeth Textor
Relatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornelia Schlosser (sister) • Christian August Vulpius (brother-in-law) • Johann Georg Schlosser (brother-in-law) • Otilie von Goethe (daughter-in-law) • Walther von Goethe (grandson)
	Signature
	
	Chancellor of the Exchequer of Duchy of Saxe-Weimar
	In office 1782–1784

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Wolfgang_von_Goethe

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (28 August 1749 – 22 March 1832) was a German [polymath](#), who is widely regarded as the greatest and most

influential writer in the German language. His work has had a profound and wide-ranging influence on Western [literary](#), [political](#), and [philosophical](#) thought from the late 18th century to the present day. A poet, playwright, novelist, scientist, statesman, theatre director, and critic, [his works](#) include plays, poetry and [aesthetic criticism](#), as well as [treatises](#) on [botany](#), [anatomy](#), and color.

Goethe took up residence in [Weimar](#) in November 1775 following the success of his first novel, [The Sorrows of Young Werther](#) (1774), and joined a thriving intellectual and cultural environment under the patronage of [Duchess Anna Amalia](#) that had already included [Abel Seyler's theatre company](#) and [Christoph Martin Wieland](#), and that formed the basis of [Weimar Classicism](#). He was [ennobled](#) by the Duke of [Saxe-Weimar](#), [Karl August](#), in 1782. Goethe was an early participant in the [Sturm und Drang](#) literary movement. During his first ten years in Weimar, Goethe became a member of the Duke's [privy council](#) (1776-1785), sat on the war and highway commissions, oversaw the reopening of silver mines in nearby [Ilmenau](#), and implemented a series of administrative reforms at the [University of Jena](#). He also contributed to the planning of Weimar's botanical park and the rebuilding of its [Ducal Palace](#).

Goethe's first major scientific work, the [Metamorphosis of Plants](#), was published after he returned from a 1788 tour of Italy. In 1791 he was made managing director of the [theatre at Weimar](#), and in 1794 he began a friendship with the [dramatist](#), historian, and philosopher [Friedrich Schiller](#), whose plays he premiered until Schiller's death in 1805. During this period Goethe published his second novel, [Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship](#); the verse epic [Hermann and Dorothea](#), and, in 1808, the first part of his most celebrated drama, [Faust](#). His conversations and various shared undertakings throughout the 1790s with Schiller, [Johann Gottlieb Fichte](#), [Johann Gottfried Herder](#), [Alexander von Humboldt](#), [Wilhelm von Humboldt](#), and [August](#) and [Friedrich Schlegel](#) have come to be collectively termed [Weimar Classicism](#).

The German philosopher [Arthur Schopenhauer](#) named *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* one of the four greatest novels ever written, while the American philosopher and essayist [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#) selected Goethe as one of six "representative men" in his [work of the same name](#) (along with [Plato](#), [Emanuel Swedenborg](#), [Montaigne](#), [Napoleon](#), and [Shakespeare](#)). Goethe's comments and observations form the basis of several biographical works, notably [Johann Peter Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe](#) (1836). His poems were set to music by many composers including [Mozart](#), [Beethoven](#), [Schubert](#), [Berlioz](#), [Liszt](#), [Wagner](#), and [Mahler](#).

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Bibliography

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Wolfgang_von_Goethe_bibliography

The following is a list of the major publications of [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#) (1749–1832). 142 volumes comprise the entirety of his literary output, ranging from the poetical to the philosophical, including 50 volumes of correspondence.

Scientific texts

- 1784: Über den Granit (About the Granite) (published posthumously in 1878)
- 1786: Über den Zwischenkiefer der Menschen und der Tiere (About the [premaxilla](#) of humans and animals)
- 1790: Versuch die Metamorphose der Pflanzen zu erklären (The [Metamorphosis of Plants](#))
- 1791-92: Beiträge zur Optik (Contributions to [Optics](#)) (2 volumes)
- 1810: Zur Farbenlehre (The [Theory of Colours](#))

Autobiographical

- 1811–1830: [Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit](#) (From my Life: Poetry and Truth) autobiographical work in 4 volumes
- 1817: [Italienische Reise](#) (Italian Journey), journals

- 1836 and 1848: [*Gespräche mit Goethe*](#) (*Conversations with Goethe*) also translated as: *Conversations with Eckermann* - posthumous

Non-fiction

- 1793: [*Die Belagerung von Mainz*](#) (*The Siege of Mainz*), non-fiction
- July 1798–1801: [*Propyläen*](#), periodical
- 1805: "[*Winckelmann*](#) und sein Jahrhundert" ("Winckelmann and His Century")

Prose

Novels

- 1774: [*Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*](#) (*The Sorrows of Young Werther*)
- 1809: [*Die Wahlverwandtschaften*](#) (*Elective Affinities*)

Wilhelm Meister Trilogy

- 1776: *Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung* (*Ur-Meister*) (*Wilhelm Meister's Theatrical Program*) - published in 1911
- 1796: [*Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*](#) (*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*)
- 1821, expanded in 1829: [*Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre, oder Die Entsagenden*](#) (*Wilhelm Meister's Journeyman Years, or the Renunciants/ Wilhelm Meister's Travels*)

Novellas

- 1794–95: *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* (*Conversations of German emigrants*) - also includes the fairy tale *Das Märchen*
- 1828: [*Novella*](#)

Short stories

- 1795: [*Das Märchen*](#) (*The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*) - a fairy tale

Poetry

- 1769 "Ohne Hast, ohne Rast" ("Haste not, Rest not")
- 1771: "[*Heidenröslein*](#)" ("Heath Rosebud"),
- 1773: "[*Prometheus*](#)",
- 1774: "[*Der König in Thule*](#)",
- 1782: "[*Der Erlkönig*](#)" ("The Alder King"),
- 1790: [*Römische Elegien*](#) (*Roman Elegies*), collection
- 1794: [*Reineke Fuchs*](#), epic fable
- 1795 "Ich Denke Dein" ("I Think of You")
- 1795–96 (in collaboration with [*Friedrich Schiller*](#)): *Die Xenien* (*The Xenia*), collection of epigrams

- 1797: "[Der Zauberlehrling](#)" (*The Sorcerer's Apprentice*), (which was later the basis of a [symphonic poem](#) by [Paul Dukas](#), which in turn was animated by Disney in [Fantasia](#))
- 1797: "Die Braut von Korinth"^[1] ("The Bride of Corinth"),
- 1798: [Hermann und Dorothea](#) (*Hermann and Dorothea*), epic
- 1798: *Die Weissagungen des Bakis* (*The Soothsayings of Bakis*)
- 1799: "[The First Walpurgis Night](#)",
- 1813: "[Gefunden](#)" ("Found"),
- 1819: [Westöstlicher Diwan](#), variously translated as *The West-Eastern Divan*, *The Parliament of East and West*, or otherwise; collection of poems in imitation of [Sufi](#) and other [Sunni Muslim](#) poetry, including that of [Hafez](#).
- 1823: "[Marienbad Elegy](#)",

Drama

- 1773: [Götz von Berlichingen](#)
- 1775: [Stella](#), tragedy in five acts (created between 1803 and 1805 from the first version of 1775, the play was premiered in Weimar on January 15, 1806)
- 1776: [Claudine von Villa Bella](#) [de]
- 1787: [Iphigenie auf Tauris](#) (*Iphigenia in Tauris*)
- 1788: [Egmont](#)
- 1790: [Torquato Tasso](#)
- 1803: [Die Natürliche Tochter](#) (*The Natural Daughter*), play originally intended as the first part of a trilogy on the [French Revolution](#)
- 1808: [Faust, Part One](#), [closet drama](#) in verse
- 1832: [Faust, Part Two](#), [closet drama](#) in verse

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Books related to Goethe

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- [Brandes, Georg](#). *Wolfgang Goethe*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1936.
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- [Eissler, Kurt R.](#). *Goethe: A Psychoanalytic Study*.
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- Holm-Hadulla, Rainer Matthias. *Goethe's Path to Creativity: A Psycho-Biography of the Eminent Politician, Scientist and Poet*, New York: Routledge, 2019. [ISBN 9780429459535](https://www.routledge.com/ISBN-9780429459535)
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- [Schweitzer, Albert](#). *Goethe: Four Studies*.
- Unseld, Siegfried. *Goethe and his Publishers*.
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- Williams, John. *The Life of Goethe. A Critical Biography*.

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A Multifaceted Genius

<https://www.ejshin.org/johann-wolfgang-von-goethe/>

Delve into the life of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, one of the greatest literary figures of the modern era. Learn about his achievements as a writer, politician, artist, and scientist, and discover how he overcame adversity.



Early Life and Education

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was born on **August 28, 1749, in Frankfurt am Main, Germany**. He was the eldest son of **Johann Caspar Goethe** and **Katharina Elisabeth Textor**. His father was a successful lawyer and Imperial Councillor. He worked for the city of Frankfurt and had a comfortable income. His mother was the daughter of the mayor of Frankfurt. He was born into a middle-class family in Frankfurt, Germany in 1749. Although he was not born into the noble class, he was treated like one thanks to his father's occupation and his mother's well-respected family and money. However, Goethe achieved great success as a writer, philosopher, and statesman, and was eventually ennobled by the Duke of Saxe-Weimar in 1782. After his ennoblement, he was known as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Goethe received his early education from private tutors and later went to **Leipzig University to study law**. However, he was more interested in literature and the arts and spent most of his time writing poetry and plays.

Achievements as a Politician

While Goethe is best known for his literary works, he was also a successful statesman during his time in Weimar. Goethe's political career began in 1775 when he was **appointed to the court of Duke Carl August in Weimar as a privy councillor**. He later became the director of the court theatre and was responsible for its productions. In 1786, he was appointed as the chief minister of state, a position he held for over a decade. During his tenure, as a minister and advisor to Duke Carl August, Goethe played an important role in shaping the political and cultural landscape of Weimar.

One of Goethe's major accomplishments as a statesman was his work on administrative and economic reforms in Weimar, **including the abolition of serfdom and the establishment of a modern civil service system**. He helped to modernize the city's infrastructure, including improvements to roads, bridges, and buildings. He also helped to establish institutions that promoted education and culture, such as the **University of Jena** and the **Weimar Art School**. Furthermore, he also worked to **improve social conditions for the peasants and artisans in Weimar**, showing **his concern for the welfare of the common people**.

Goethe was also effective in diplomatic and foreign affairs. He had a good relationship with many European leaders and was involved in several important negotiations and treaties,

such as the Congress of Erfurt in 1808 (he met with Napoleon Bonapart!), which aimed to strengthen relations between France and Germany.

Achievements as a Writer

Goethe's literary contributions were immense and varied, covering everything from novels and plays to poetry and essays. His most famous works include **"Faust," "The Sorrows of Young Werther,"** and **"Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship."** He was **a pioneer of the Sturm und Drang literary movement,** which emphasized **strong emotions and individualism.** His works explored themes such as **love, death,** and the **human condition,** making him one of the most influential literary figures in modern history. Refer to FAQ for more.

Goethe saw writing as a way to explore his own experiences and emotions, and to gain a better understanding of himself and the world around him. In this sense, writing could be seen as a form of therapy for him.

Goethe often used his own life as a source of inspiration for his literary works, and he wrote extensively about his own thoughts, feelings, and struggles. He believed that writing was a way to connect with others and to share his experiences in a way that could be both cathartic and enlightening.

For example, in his novel "The Sorrows of Young Werther," Goethe drew on his own experiences of unrequited love and emotional turmoil to create a powerful portrait of a young man's inner life. In his later works, such as "Faust," he continued to explore themes of personal growth and transformation through his writing.

Achievements as an Artist

Although Goethe did not consider himself a professional artist, he was a talented amateur and created many paintings, sketches, and drawings throughout his life. His works often depicted nature, reflecting his interest in the natural sciences. He also designed costumes and stage sets for the theater, showcasing his artistic talents.

Achievements as a Scientist

Goethe was an avid scientist and made significant contributions to various fields, incl. **anatomy, botany, geology, color theory, etc. among other fields,** and was a prolific writer on scientific topics. He developed **the theory of color,** which states that

the perception of color is a result of the interaction between light and the human eye. He also made important contributions to **the study of morphology** (he proposed the idea that all plant parts are derived from the same basic organ), or the structure of organisms, and was a proponent of the idea that living things should be studied in their natural habitats. **He believed that science and art were two sides of the same coin and that observation was the key to understanding nature.** His approach to science was holistic, and he saw nature as a unified whole.

- **Botany**

Goethe's interest in botany began during his university years when he studied under the prominent botanist **Johann Zinn**. He was fascinated by the complexity of plants and believed that their form and structure could reveal their inner workings. He wrote extensively on the subject and even coined the term "**morphology**" to describe the study of the form and structure of living organisms.

- **Geology**

Goethe was also interested in geology and made significant contributions to the field. He believed that rocks were formed by the interaction of heat and pressure and that their form and structure could reveal their history. He also studied the formation of mountains and believed that they were formed by the gradual uplift of the earth's crust.

- **Color Theory**

Goethe's most significant contribution to science was in the field of color theory. He believed that color was not just a physical phenomenon but was also connected to human perception and emotion. He rejected Isaac Newton's theory that color was produced by the refraction of light and instead proposed that it was the result of the interaction between light and darkness.

Overcoming Adversity

Despite his many achievements, Goethe faced his **fair share of challenges and setbacks in life**. He suffered from **bouts of depression and anxiety in his 20s**. He believed that these experiences were a necessary part of the creative process and that they allowed him to connect more deeply with his emotions and experiences. He also believed that nature was a source of solace and often went on long walks in the countryside to alleviate his symptoms. Besides numerous unrequited love, he also had rejection from some of his contemporaries. Despite these difficulties, Goethe remained committed to his work and

continued to pursue his interests and passions. He believed in the power of creativity and self-expression to overcome adversity and find meaning in life. His ability to bounce back from difficult situations is evident in his continued productivity and success throughout his life.

Goethe's love life was tumultuous and complicated. He had numerous affairs with women (and men? - please refer to the FAQ), but his most significant relationships were with **Charlotte von Stein** and **Christiane Vulpius**. His relationship with Charlotte von Stein lasted for many years but was ultimately unrequited. His relationship with **Christiane Vulpius** was scandalous because she was considered to be beneath his social station.

Charlotte von SteinGoethe

Conclusion

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was a true Renaissance man, whose achievements in literature, art, science, politics, and geology continue to inspire and captivate people around the world. His multifaceted talents and holistic approach to knowledge exemplify the ideals of the Enlightenment era. Moreover, his ability to overcome personal hardships and emerge stronger is a testament to his resilience and tenacity. Goethe's legacy lives on as a testament to the power of the human spirit.

Next, I am planning a Goethe-themed trip to Weimar, Germany. I visited his birth house in Frankfurt several years ago and fell in love with the place; I didn't want to leave the place. I also tried to follow his steps in Italy much inspired by his book 'Italian Journey' 15 years ago, and now, my eyes are on Weimar to get closer to his spirit. I will keep you posted! If you have any suggestions on the places or resources related to Goethe, please do let me know!

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His BOOKS

<https://thegreatestbooks.org/authors/4944>

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was a German writer and statesman. His body of work includes epic and lyric poetry written in a variety of meters and styles; prose and verse dramas; memoirs; an autobiography; literary and aesthetic criticism; treatises on botany,

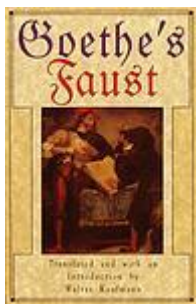
anatomy, and colour; and four novels. He is considered one of the greatest literary figures of the modern era.

BOOKS

This list of books are ONLY the books that have been ranked on the lists that are aggregated on this site. This is not a comprehensive list of all books by this author.

1. Faust

A Tragedy



The book is a tragic play in two parts that tells the story of a scholarly man named Faust, who becomes dissatisfied with his life and makes a pact with the devil, Mephistopheles. In exchange for unlimited knowledge and worldly pleasures, Faust agrees to give his soul to Mephistopheles after death. The narrative explores themes of ambition, despair, love, and redemption, ultimately leading to Faust's salvation.

The 80th Greatest Book of All Time.

2. The Sorrows of Young Werther

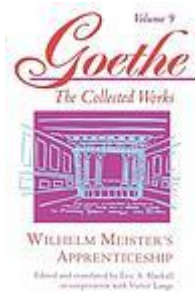


This classic novel follows the emotional journey of a young artist named Werther, who falls deeply in love with a beautiful woman named Lotte, only to discover that she is already engaged to another man. His unrequited love and deep despair eventually lead him to take his own life. The story, told through letters written by Werther, explores themes of love, loss, and the tragic consequences of emotional turmoil.

The 330th Greatest Book of All Time.

3. Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship

The Years of Apprenticeship



"Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship" is a classic coming-of-age story that follows the protagonist, Wilhelm, through his journey of self-discovery. Caught between his bourgeois background and his aspirations to become an actor, Wilhelm embarks on an odyssey that introduces him to a variety of characters and experiences. The novel explores themes of love, loss, and the pursuit of artistic excellence, while also critiquing the social norms and expectations of the time.

The 905th Greatest Book of All Time.

4. Elective Affinities



This novel explores the romantic relationships and social dynamics of four characters: a married couple, their close friend, and a young girl who becomes part of the household. The story is a study of how people's choices, passions, and societal norms can shape their relationships, often with tragic consequences. The narrative delves into themes of marriage, love, morality, and the intersection of personal feelings with societal expectations.

The 1021st Greatest Book of All Time.

5. Faust, First Part

A Tragedy



The story follows a disillusioned scholar who, in his quest for ultimate knowledge and fulfillment, makes a pact with the devil, Mephistopheles. Promised unlimited worldly pleasures and experiences, he embarks on a journey that explores themes of ambition, desire, and the duality of human nature. As he navigates love, temptation, and moral dilemmas, he is ultimately confronted with the consequences of his choices, highlighting the eternal struggle between good and evil within the human soul.

The 8389th Greatest Book of All Time.

6. Faust, Part Two

The Tragedy of Faust, Part Two

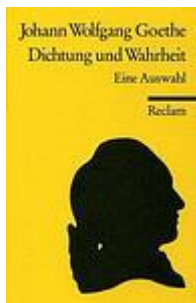


The continuation of the legendary tale delves into the complexities of human ambition, redemption, and the eternal struggle between good and evil. The protagonist embarks on a journey through various realms, encountering mythical and historical figures, as he seeks fulfillment and understanding beyond earthly pleasures. The narrative explores themes of power, love, and the pursuit of knowledge, ultimately leading to a profound exploration of the human condition and the possibility of salvation. The work is rich with allegory and philosophical depth, reflecting on the nature of existence and the eternal quest for meaning.

The 8431st Greatest Book of All Time

7. *Dichtung Und Wahrheit*

Aus meinem Leben



This autobiographical work offers a rich and introspective account of the author's early life, intellectual development, and the cultural milieu of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It delves into his formative experiences, relationships, and the evolution of his thoughts and literary career. The narrative not only provides insights into the author's personal journey but also reflects on the broader human experience, exploring themes of truth, art, and the interplay between personal reality and creative expression. Through a blend of poetic storytelling and philosophical musings, the book presents a nuanced exploration of the shaping of an individual's identity and the forces that influence the creative process.

The 10960th Greatest Book of All Time

8. *Italian Journey*



The book is a classic travel memoir that chronicles the author's journey through Italy from 1786 to 1788. During his travels, he explores the rich cultural heritage, art, and history of the country, seeking to understand the influence of classical antiquity and the Renaissance on contemporary European thought. The narrative is a blend of personal reflections, detailed descriptions of the landscapes, cities, and people he

encounters, as well as musings on art and literature. The author's experiences in Italy mark a significant period of personal growth and intellectual development, profoundly impacting his subsequent literary work and contributing to the broader European cultural movement known as Weimar Classicism.

The 10970th Greatest Book of All Time

9. [Egmont](#)

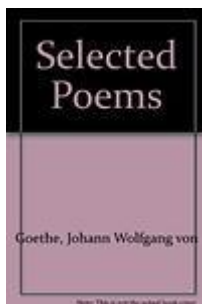


"Egmont" is a tragic play set in the 16th-century Spanish-occupied Netherlands, focusing on the life of a nobleman who becomes a hero among the Dutch people for his resistance against the oppressive Spanish rule. The protagonist's political and romantic involvements lead him into conflict with the Spanish authorities, culminating in his arrest and execution. Despite his tragic end, his sacrifice becomes a symbol of national resistance and inspires a successful uprising against the foreign dominators. The play explores themes of freedom, tyranny, and the personal costs of political engagement, blending historical drama with romantic elements.

The 11533rd Greatest Book of All Time

10. [Poems Of Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe](#)

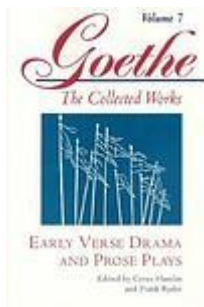
A Selection of His Best Works



This collection encapsulates the lyrical genius of one of Germany's most revered literary figures, offering a diverse selection of poetry that spans themes of love, nature, and the human condition. The poems reflect the author's profound insight into the complexities of the soul and the beauty of the world around him, showcasing his mastery of language and his ability to evoke deep emotion and contemplation. The work is a testament to the enduring power of poetic expression and the timeless relevance of the author's reflections on life and art.

The 11533rd Greatest Book of All Time

11. [Verse Plays](#)

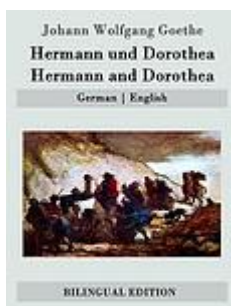


The book is a collection of dramatic works written in verse by the renowned German literary figure. These plays showcase the author's versatility and mastery in blending classical and romantic elements within the theatrical form. The content ranges from explorations of mythological themes to humanistic inquiries, all unified by the author's poetic language and philosophical depth. The plays within this compilation are celebrated for their lyrical beauty and intellectual rigor, reflecting the author's profound understanding of the human condition and his ability to translate complex ideas into compelling dramatic narratives.

The 11533rd Greatest Book of All Time

12. [Hermann And Dorothea](#)

A Poem



This classic narrative poem tells the story of two young people, Hermann and Dorothea, who find love amidst the turmoil of war. Set against the backdrop of the French Revolution's impact on Germany, the poem explores themes of duty, community, and the personal transformations that arise from political upheaval. Hermann, the son of a prosperous innkeeper, initially sets out to aid refugees fleeing the conflict and encounters Dorothea, a strong and principled woman among them. Their relationship develops as they navigate the challenges of their time, ultimately leading to a union that symbolizes hope and the enduring human spirit in the face of adversity.

The 11533rd Greatest Book of All Time

13. [Roman Elegies](#)



"Roman Elegies" is a collection of twenty-four poems that celebrate the classical heritage of ancient Rome while reflecting on contemporary European society. The poems are notable for their eroticism and the personal nature of their content, as they delve into the author's own experiences and emotions during his time in Italy. Through a blend of personal reflection and homage to the ancient world, the work explores themes of love, art, and the human experience, blending the sensual with the intellectual. The elegies are a testament to the author's passion for classical culture and his mastery of poetic form, as well as his ability to infuse his verse with both the depth of his scholarly interests and the intensity of his personal feelings.

The 11533rd Greatest Book of All Time

14. Venetian Epigrams

A Collection of Witty and Satirical Poems

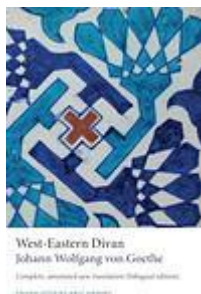


"Venetian Epigrams" is a collection of short, incisive poems that reflect the author's observations and experiences during a stay in Venice. Written with a blend of wit, irony, and lyrical beauty, the epigrams delve into themes such as love, sexuality, art, and the nature of society. The author's sharp commentary on the Venetian way of life, as well as his personal reflections on human relationships and the pursuit of pleasure, are presented in a concise and often provocative manner, revealing the depth of his engagement with the culture and the vibrancy of the city that inspired him.

The 11533rd Greatest Book of All Time

15. West Eastern Divan

Poems of the Orient and Occident

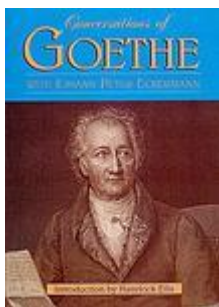


The book in question is a collection of lyrical poems that reflects the author's fascination with Persian culture, inspired by the works of the Persian poet Hafez. It serves as a poetic dialogue that bridges Western and Eastern cultural traditions, exploring themes of love, wine, and the nuanced interplay between nature, humanity, and the divine. The work is notable for its attempt to transcend cultural barriers and promote understanding between the Occident and the Orient, showcasing the author's deep appreciation for the richness of Middle Eastern literature and philosophy.

The 11533rd Greatest Book of All Time

16. Conversations Of Goethe With Johann Peter Eckermann

In the Last Years of His Life



This book is a compilation of detailed discussions between one of Germany's greatest literary figures and his close friend and secretary, spanning from 1823 to 1832. It offers an intimate glimpse into the mind, thoughts, and philosophies of the celebrated writer, covering a wide array of subjects including literature, art, science, and the nature of human existence. Through these conversations, readers are provided with profound insights into the intellectual landscape of early 19th-century Europe and the personal reflections of a man who shaped modern German literature. The dialogues are not only significant for their historical context but also for their enduring relevance to contemporary discussions on culture and creativity.

The 11511th Greatest Book of All Time

17. Goethe's Poems



This collection presents a diverse array of poems that capture the essence of human emotion and experience, reflecting on themes such as love, nature, and the passage of time. The poems showcase the author's mastery of language and form, offering profound insights into the human condition through vivid imagery and lyrical beauty. The works range from introspective and contemplative to passionate and exuberant, illustrating the poet's ability to convey deep philosophical ideas with elegance and clarity. This compilation serves as a testament to the enduring power of poetry to evoke thought and feeling across generations.

18. Faust, Część 1

Tragedia

The story follows a disillusioned scholar who, in his quest for ultimate knowledge and fulfillment, makes a pact with the devil, trading his soul for worldly pleasures and experiences. As he navigates through various encounters and temptations, he becomes entangled in a tragic romance with an innocent young woman, leading to devastating consequences. The narrative explores themes of ambition, desire, and the eternal struggle between good and evil, highlighting the complexities of human nature and the pursuit of meaning in life.

[Other Important Web Links relating to his BOOKS & Life](#)

[01]https://www.thriftbooks.com/a/johann-wolfgang-von-goethe/199177/?srsltid=AfmBOorr1_BLRC_vf0jdUFAif_zBwa_CBSLiIdW4athi_e3GeDNc1W5IS

[02] https://press.princeton.edu/our-authors/von-goethe-johann-wolfgang?srsItd=AfmBOorcUpYMKusHIXNop3pSw7rzXhCCbIfETONCGpm27PE2_SFvHV8e

[03] <https://citylights.com/author/johann-wolfgang-von-goethe/>

[04] https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Johann_Wolfgang_von_Goethe

[05] <https://sites.google.com/site/germanliterature/18th-century/goethe>

[06] <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/johann-wolfgang-von-goethe>

[07] <https://fivebooks.com/best-books/goethe-david-wellbery/>

[08] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Wolfgang_von_Goethe_bibliography

[09] <https://10famousworks.com/literature/10-famous-works-goethe/>

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TIMELINE

1749

On August 28, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe is born in Frankfurt am Main. His father is a lawyer and hopes that his son will follow in his footsteps.

1765

In accordance with his father's wishes, Goethe moves to Leipzig to study law. Yet he is already interested in literature, and in 1767, inspired by his love for one Anna Katharina Schönpkopf, Goethe will publish his first volume of poetry.

1768

Goethe returns to Frankfurt. A lifelong polymath, he begins to study philosophy, science, and art. He also expresses an interest in alchemy.

1770

Goethe returns to law school, this time in Strasbourg. In a seeming repeat of his experience in Leipzig, he once again publishes a volume of poetry inspired by his love for a young woman. This time, the woman in question is Friedericke Brion, a pastor's daughter.

1772

While working as a lawyer in Wetzlar, Goethe strikes up a friendship with two local court secretaries, Christian Kestner and Karl Wilhelm Jerusalem—along with Kestner's fiancée, Charlotte Buff. The turbulent events of this summer will inspire his first novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.

This same year, Goethe begins working on a drama based on the story of Faust. He will work on the play, on and off, for the next six decades. Over the next few years, he will also strike up friendships with many of the most influential poets of the Sturm und Drang movement.

1774

The Sorrows of Young Werther is published. It is an immediate hit across Europe.

1775

Goethe is offered a position as an advisor to Grand Duke Karl August at the court of Weimar. His courtly duties keep him busy, and he will finish no major literary project during the next decade. He does, however, manage to undertake studies in anatomy and mineralogy.

In the meantime, Goethe's romantic entanglements continue. In 1775, he falls in love with a young woman named Lili Schönemann and proposes to her, but he soon breaks off the engagement. In November of the same year, he makes the acquaintance of Charlotte von Stein, the wife of another employee at the Weimar court. Goethe and Stein will remain close friends for much of his life.

1786

Without taking leave of either his employer or his friends, Goethe abandons Weimar and spends two years traveling in Italy under a pseudonym. Inspired by the art of both Renaissance Italy and Classical antiquity, Goethe considers becoming an artist.

1788

Goethe returns to Weimar. The time away has been good for his productivity, and in the second half of the 1780s he completes several plays and publishes another collection of poetry.

1790

Goethe publishes the first volume of *Faust*.

1791

Goethe is appointed director of the Weimar Court Theater. Although he will travel extensively over the coming decades, he will retain the position until 1817.

1792-93

Grand Duke Karl August leads the Prussian military on several campaigns against Napoleon's troops. Goethe often accompanies him.

1806

Goethe finally gets married. The bride is Christiane Vulpius, a young woman who works in Weimar's artificial flower factories. This same year, the Prussian army is defeated by the French at the Battle of Jena, and Napoleon's troops invade Weimar.

1808

Although Goethe has long been a trusted advisor of Napoleon's enemy Grand Duke Karl August, Napoleon is a great admirer of his work. In 1808, the French emperor names the Prussian poet to the French Legion of Honor.

1810

Goethe has continued his studies in a variety of fields, and in 1810 he publishes *On Color*. Although his theories of color have more to do with art, philosophy, and perception than with science, the work will be highly influential in the 19th century.

1811

The first volume of Goethe's poetry collection *Poetry and Truth* is published. Two more volumes will be published in 1812 and 1813.

1812

Goethe meets the composer Ludwig van Beethoven.

1816

Goethe's wife Christiane dies.

1823

Visiting the spa town of Marienbad, Goethe meets and falls in love with the teenage Ulrike von Levetzow. When she turns down his proposal of marriage, he writes a set of three poems documenting his heartbreak; one of these poems is titled "To Werther."

1831

Goethe completes the second volume of *Faust* and the fourth volume of *Poetry and Truth*. Both works will be published posthumously.

1832

Goethe dies on March 22. He is buried in Weimar.

Also, kindly visit: <https://eoht.info/page/Goethe%20timeline>

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[Goethe's birthplace](#) in Frankfurt



[Goethe's residence and museum](#)



A Goethe watercolour depicting a [liberty pole](#) at the border to the short-lived [Republic of Mainz](#), created under influence of the French Revolution and destroyed in the [Siege of Mainz](#) in which Goethe participated.



Goethe and Ulrike, sculpture by Heinrich Drake in Marienbad.

Quintessential Quotable QUOTES

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0324473/quotes/>

- Girls we love for what they are; young men for what they promise to be.
-
- Nothing shows a man's character more than what he laughs at.
 - If youth is a fault, it is one that one gets rid of soon enough.
 - [on children] If children grew up according to early indications, we should have nothing but geniuses.
 - [on choice] Decision and perseverance are the noblest qualities of man.
 - [on encouragement/discouragement] Encouragement after censure is as the sun after a shower.
 - Smoking stupefies a man, and makes him incapable of thinking or writing. It is only fit for idlers, people who are always bored, who sleep for a third of their lifetime, fritter away another third in eating, drinking, and other necessary or unnecessary affairs, and don't know-though they are always complaining that life is so short-what to do with the rest of their time. Such lazy Turks find mental solace in handling a pipe and gazing at the clouds of smoke that they puff into the air; it helps them to kill time. Smoking induces drinking beer, for hot mouths need to be cooled down. Beer thickens the blood, and adds to the intoxication produced by the narcotic smoke. The nerves are dulled and the blood clotted. If they go on as they seem to be doing now, in two or three generations we shall see what these beer-swillers and smoke-puffers have made of Germany. You will notice the effect on our literature-mindless, formless, and hopeless; and those very people will wonder how it has come about. And think of the cost of it all! Fully 25,000,000 thalers a year end in smoke all over Germany, and the sum may rise to forty, fifty, or sixty millions. The hungry are still unfed, and the naked unclad. What can become of all the money? Smoking, too, is gross rudeness and

unsociability. Smokers poison the air far and wide and choke every decent man, unless he takes to smoking in self-defence. Who can enter a smoker's room without feeling ill? Who can stay there without perishing?

- Do not, I beg you, look for anything behind phenomena. They are themselves their own lesson.
- Anyone who tortures animals has no soul and lacks God's good spirit, no matter how noble he may look, you should never trust him.
- If you like someone, you have to understand them. You don't always have to see your mistakes here and there. Look with love and forgiveness, because in the end you yourself are not flawless.
- I like to remember the times when all my limbs were flexible - except for one. But those times are over, all limbs have become stiff - except for one.
- Where right becomes wrong, resistance becomes a duty.
- Anyone who does not want to comply with the laws must leave the area where they apply.
- The world is full of folly, dullness, inconsistency and injustice; It takes a lot of courage not to give up on them and move aside.
- It is one of the saddest conditions under which we suffer to find ourselves separated, not only by death, but also by life, from those whom we value and love most and whose cooperation could best benefit us.
- One must always repeat the truth, because error is constantly being preached around us, and not by individuals, but by the masses. In newspapers and encyclopedias, at schools and universities, everywhere, error is at the forefront, and it is comfortable and comfortable with the feeling of the majority being on its side.
- It's not enough to know - you also have to apply. It's not enough to want - you also have to do.

- Nature has placed in every good heart the feeling that it cannot be happy on its own and that it must seek its happiness in the good of others.
- It's better to decide about right than exactly wrong.
- No one is more a slave than he who thinks he is free without being so.
- Nothing defines people's character more than what they find ridiculous.
- The most powerful fantasy is public opinion: no one knows exactly who makes it, no one has ever met it personally, but everyone allows themselves to be tyrannized by it!
- What no one dares, you should dare, what no one says, says what no one thinks, dares to think what no one starts, carries it out.
- Tell me who you associate with, and I will tell you who you are; If I know what you're busy with, I know what you can become.
- Children should get two things from their parents: roots and wings.
- Whoever strives hard, / We can redeem him.
- The newspaper writer himself is really to be deplored / He often knows nothing and is often not allowed to say anything.
- Happy when the days flow, alternating between joy and sorrow, between creating and enjoying, between the world and loneliness.
- What you have inherited from your fathers, acquire it to possess it! What you don't use, is a heavy burden.
- But I am what I am, and just accept me! If you want to own better ones, have them carved for you!
- When your head and heart are buzzing, what better could you want! Anyone who no longer loves and no longer makes mistakes, let them be buried.
- Treat people as they are and they will get worse. Treat people as they could be and they will get better!
- Of all nations, the Greeks dreamed the dream of life most beautifully.

- If you make yourself too green, the goats will eat you.
- Do you want to keep rambling? See the good is so close. Just learn to seize happiness: because happiness is always there.
- Nature doesn't know how to joke, it is always true, always serious, always strict, it is always right, and the mistakes and errors are always human.
- The purpose of life is life itself.
- I want to be free in thinking and writing. The world limits our actions enough.
- It's not that the friends come together, but that they agree.
- Every beginning is easy, and the last steps are the hardest and most rarely climbed.
- Everybody only hears what he understands.
- You've only really been where you've been on foot.
- That's the last word; He deserves freedom like life, who has to conquer it every day.
- There's no way that's right with this world; In vain you are good, in vain you are efficient, she wants us to be tame, she even wants us to be worthless!
- The spirits I called, / I can't get rid of them now.
- As soon as the mind is focused on a goal, many things come towards it.
- Have you researched the inner relationships of an action? Do you know with certainty how to develop the causes, why it happened, why it had to happen? If you had that, you wouldn't be so hasty in your judgments!
- He who does not love music does not deserve to be called a human being; He who only loves her is only half a person; But whoever does it is a whole person.
- I'm writing you a long letter because I don't have time to write a short one.
- If you want to find joy in the whole, you have to see the whole in the smallest things.
- Ingratitude is always a kind of weakness. I have never seen good people being ungrateful.

- For we cannot form children according to our own desires; Just as God gave them to us, that's how we have to have them and love them. They educate in the best possible way and allow everyone to have their way. For one has one gift and another has other gifts; Everyone needs it, and everyone is only good and happy in their own way.
- A real German man doesn't like Franzen (Frenchmen), / But he likes to drink their wines.
- Plastic actually only works at its highest level; Everything in the middle can probably impress for more than one reason; But all medium-sized works of art of this kind are more confusing than pleasing. The art of sculpture must therefore still look for a material interest, and it finds this in the portraits of important people. But here too it has to reach a high level if it wants to be true and worthy at the same time.
- Faust. Well then, who are you? Mephistopheles. A part of that power that always wants evil and always creates good.
- The people never feel the devil, / even if he had them by the collar.
- And I have found that misunderstanding and sloth perhaps make more mistakes in the world than cunning and malice. At least the latter two are certainly rarer.
- The best thing is the deep silence in which I live against the world and grow and win what they cannot take from me with fire and sword.
- One thing stands above all virtues: the constant striving upwards, the struggle with oneself, the insatiable desire for greater purity, wisdom, goodness, love.
- The world judges by appearances.
- The happy, the comfortable person has good things to say, but he would be ashamed if he realized how unbearable he becomes to the sufferer.
- The words have been exchanged enough, let me finally see actions! While you are making compliments, something useful can happen.

- Irony is the grain of salt that makes what is served edible in the first place.
- No friendship can be imagined without sacrifice.
- No German can lace a shoe who hasn't learned it from a foreign nation.
- A false doctrine cannot be refuted because it rests on the conviction that what is false is true. But the opposite can, may and must be stated repeatedly.
- You have to constantly change, renew, rejuvenate in order not to become rigid.
- The grimace of party spirit disgusts me more than any other caricature.
- Just keep yourself pure in silence and let it rage around you! The more you feel like you are human, the more like you are to the gods.
- In colorful images, little clarity, much error and a spark of truth, this is how the best drink is brewed, which refreshes and uplifts the whole world.
- In great undertakings and in great dangers, carelessness must be banned.
- Language is indeed based on the human ability to understand and reason, but it does not presuppose pure understanding, developed reason, and honest will in those who use it. It is a tool to be used purposefully and arbitrarily; one can use it just as well for a subtle, confusing dialectic as for a confused, darkening mysticism...
- Unhappiness is also good. I learned a lot during my illness that I couldn't have learned anywhere in my life.
- Just accept my life, as I lead it; Others sleep through their intoxication, mine is on the paper.
- A work like this is actually never finished; you have to declare it finished when you have done what is possible given the time and circumstances.
- You can't experience soon enough how dispensable you are in the world.

- Experience is almost always a parody of the idea.
- I am a child of peace and want to keep peace for and with the whole world, since I once made it with myself.
- I can think of nothing better on Sundays and public holidays than a conversation about war and the cries of war, when the peoples are fighting each other far away in Turkey. You stand at the window, drink your drink and watch the colorful ships glide down the river; Then you return home happy in the evening and bless peace and times of peace.
- A certain philosophy responds to every age of man. The child appears as a realist; because he finds himself as convinced of the existence of pears and apples as of his own... The old man, however, will always profess mysticism. He sees that so much seems to depend on chance: the unreasonable succeeds, the rational fails, luck and unhappiness unexpectedly align themselves...
- How can you get to know yourself? Never by looking, but by acting. Try to do your duty and you will immediately know what is wrong with you. But what is your duty? The demand of the day.
- Thinking and doing, doing and thinking, This is the sum of all wisdom, Recognized from time immemorial, practiced from time immemorial, Not seen by anyone. Both must, like inhaling and exhaling, move on and on forever in life; Like question and answer, one shouldn't take place without the other.
- The spirit of medicine is easy to grasp, you study the big and small world in order to let it go in the end as God pleases.
- It is not the circumstances that determine us, but we determine our circumstances.
- We like to walk on the plain with our eyes on the summit.
- If you only trust yourself, the other souls will trust you.
- Divine power is spread everywhere, and eternal love is active everywhere.
- If you think that the unity of Germany consists in having a single residence, you are wrong.

- Intellect cannot cure mental suffering, reason can do little, time can do much, determined activity can cure everything.
- People are not only together when they are together, the distant, the secluded also lives in us.
- If you didn't pull off great pranks when you were young and sometimes take a beating, what would you want to have to study when you're older?
- You will live to be three hundred years old if you just do your things honestly every day.
- Sun cannot be without light, man cannot be without love.
- Without wine and without women, the devil shall take our bodies.
- The optimist will always do best because if everything goes well, he is right, but if things go bad, he has not tormented himself with things that were inevitable.
- The senses are not deceiving, the judgment is deceiving.
- Man only fears what he does not know, and what he avoids he will soon misunderstand.
- Character rests on personality, not on talents. Talents can join the character, but he does not join them, because everything is dispensable to him except personality.
- You only see what you know. Actually: You only see what you already know and understand.
- Resentment and hatred limit the observer to the surface, even when insight accompanies them; If, on the other hand, this is twinned with benevolence and love, it penetrates the world and people, and can even hope to reach the Most High.
- The best joy is dwelling in yourself.
- Everything that is supposed to impress us must have character.
- One criticizes anarchy and tyranny with equal right; But where is the desirable middle state? The sensible person tries to bring it into being in his circle, and he hardly succeeds.
- Man becomes a different person in his different stages of life, but I cannot say that he becomes better, and in certain things he can be as right in his twentieth year as in his sixtieth.

- You can also build beautiful things out of stones that are placed in your path.
- In general, no one learns anything just by listening to it, and anyone who does not make an independent effort in certain things knows only superficially and half-knowledge.
- The mind alone can save you from the chains of faith.
- Where there is much light, there is strong shadow.
- Those who inherit their parents' goods and not their virtues are only half heirs.
- So be polite! - Polite with the pack? You can't sew a rough sack with silk.
- Confusing teachings for confusing trade rule the world, and I have nothing more important to do than, if possible, to enhance what is and has remained in me and to purify my peculiarities, as you, worthy friend, do in your castle and also accomplish.
- If God had wanted me differently; then he would have made me different.
- Love grants in a moment what effort rarely achieves in a long time.
- The cold becomes warm, / the rich become poor, / the fool becomes clever:/ Everything in its own time.
- Let me cry! There's no shame in that. Crying men are good.
- The wise say: judge no one until you have stood in his place.
- Anyone who knows themselves and others will also recognize here: Orient and Occident can no longer be separated.
- My dear Christian, how you are deceived, if your heaven is not truth! My dear atheist, how deceived you are, if hell is a truth!

Visit these Web Links for MORE quotations:

01] <https://quotefancy.com/johann-wolfgang-von-goethe-quotes>

02] https://www.azquotes.com/author/5628-Johann_Wolfgang_von_Goethe

03]https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/285217.Johann_Wolfgang_von_Goethe

04]<https://www.forbes.com/quotes/author/johann-wolfgang-von-goethe/>



Coffins of Goethe and Schiller,
Weimar vault



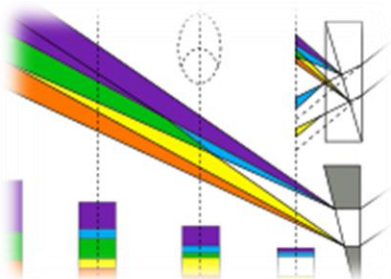
First edition of
The Sorrows of Young Werther



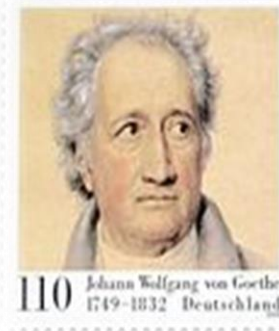
1876 'Faust' by Goethe, decorated
by Rudolf Seitz, large German edition
51x38cm



Goethe-Schiller Monument, Weimar
(1857)



Light spectrum, from Theory of Colours.
Goethe observed that with a prism, colour
arises at light-dark edges, and the spectrum
occurs where these coloured edges overlap.



Goethe on a 1999 German stamp



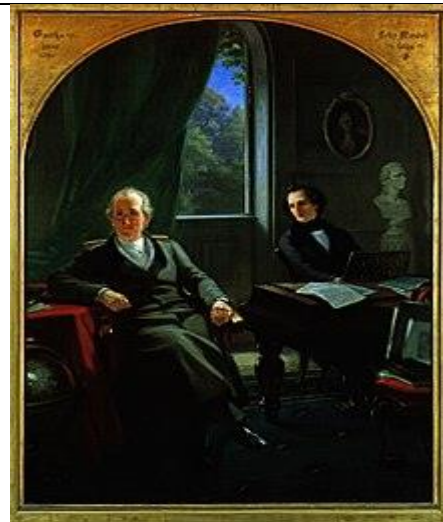
Statue dedicated "To Goethe the Mastermind of the German People" in Chicago's Lincoln Park (1913)



Illustration of Goethe as a classical poet by Fidus (1901)



Second Goetheanum



Mendelssohn plays to Goethe, 1830: painting by Moritz Oppenheim, 1864



Goethe memorial in front of the **Alte Handelsbörse, Leipzig**



Schiller, Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Goethe in Jena, c. 1797

Statue of Goethe

<http://www.saint-petersburg.com/monuments/goethe/>

Although Goethe never made it to Russia, his works are widely considered almost a part of the country's literature, largely thanks to the efforts of Russian poets including Vasily Zhukovsky, Mikhail Lermontov and Boris Pasternak, all of whom translated them into Russian. And it was Goethe's arguably most famous work that influenced Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin, to write his "*Scenes from Faust*".



Statue of Goethe next to St Peter's Church

The bust was created by the outstanding Petersburg monumentalist sculptor and artist Levon Lazarev, whose works bring together the classical school and an occasionally experimental approach. Lazarev's works are portrait sculptures that aim not just at reflecting his subjects' physical image but also at capturing some of their inner, spiritual essence.

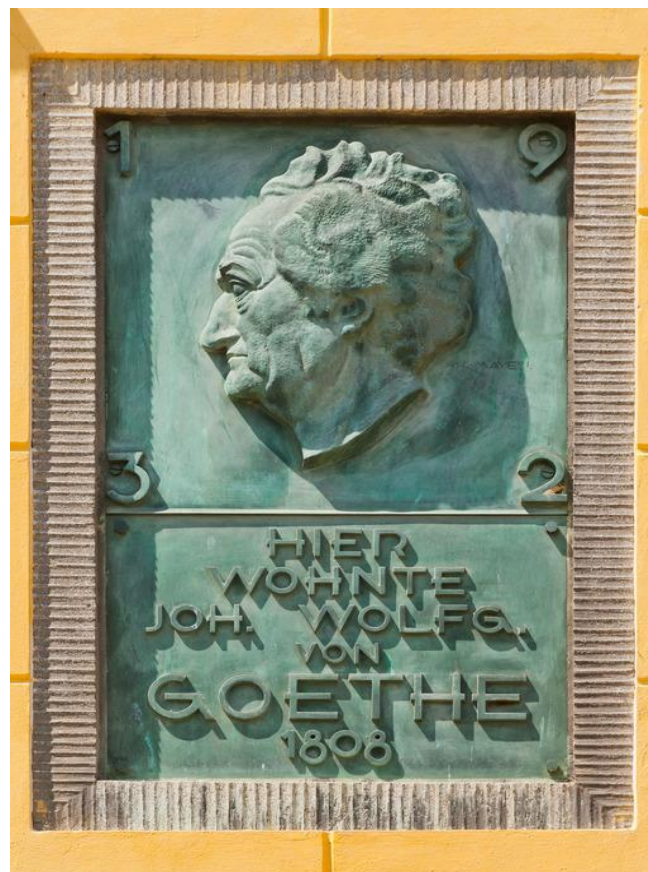
Sculptures by Lazarev - including his portrayals of Goethe, the Italian architect Giacomo Quarenghi, the Russian dissident academic Andrei Sakharov and a monument to those who died in the Second World War - can be found throughout the center of Petersburg. Another feature of

Lazarev's work is the unusual harmony that his creations have with their surroundings, as Lazarev was always very sensitive to the location where his statues were placed.

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The Memorial Plaque

<https://www.frantiskovy-lazne.info/en/interesting-places/the-memorial-plaque-of-johann-wolfgang-goethe-on-national-narodni-avenue-412>



Description

The author of the memorial plaque of J. W. Goethe found on the building at address National (Národní) Avenue No. 10/3 is **J.A. Mayerl**.

The bronze plaque is embedded into the façade of the building with a **bas relief** of **Goethe's head** placed within a **granite frame**. In the corners of the metal

plaque, there are the numbers 1932, alluding to the jubilee year of the 100th anniversary of J.W. Goethe's death. The plaque was cast by the bell workshop of R. Herold from Chomutov.

The memorial plaque of J.W. Goethe at Komorní hůrka Hill commemorates Goethe as a geologist and natural scientist and celebrates his scientific contribution to the exploration of the geological origins of the hill. In 1932, a bas relief with Goethe's profile was sculpted directly into the rocks not far from Sternberg's adit. The author of it was Adolf Mayerl. The inscription above the entrance to the exploratory mining adit is "Den Naturfreunden gewidmet von G.K. Sternberg 1837".

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This Web Links contains:

" Monuments and memorials to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe"

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Monuments_and_memorials_to_Johann_Wolfgang_von_Goethe

Goethe-Schiller Monument

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goethe%E2%80%93Schiller_Monument

Goethe and Schiller

German: *Goethe und Schiller*





[Wikimedia](#) | © [OpenStreetMap](#)

Artist	Ernst Friedrich August Rietschel
Year	1857
Type	bronze casting
Dimensions	3.7 m (12 ft)
Location	Weimar (copies in San Francisco, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Syracuse, & Anting)
	 50°58′48″N 11°19′34″E

The original **Goethe–Schiller Monument** (German: **Goethe-Schiller-Denkmal**) is in [Weimar](#), Germany. It incorporates [Ernst Rietschel](#)'s 1857 bronze double statue of [Johann Wolfgang Goethe](#) (1749–1832) and [Friedrich Schiller](#) (1759–1805), who are probably the two most revered figures in German literature. The monument has been described "as one of the most famous and most beloved monuments in all of Germany" and as the beginning of a "cult of the monument". Dozens of monuments to Goethe and to Schiller were built subsequently in Europe and the United States.

Goethe and Schiller had a remarkable friendship and collaboration that was "like no other known to literature or art." Both men had lived in Weimar, and were the seminal figures of a literary movement known as [Weimar Classicism](#). The bronze figures of the Goethe–Schiller statue are substantially larger than life-size; notably, both are given the same height, even though Goethe was nearly 20 cm shorter than Schiller.

The figures were mounted on a large stone pedestal in front of the Court Theater that Goethe had directed, and that had seen premieres and countless performances of Schiller's plays. Goethe is on the left in the photograph, his left hand resting lightly on Schiller's shoulder. Goethe grasps a [laurel wreath](#) in his right hand, and Schiller's right hand is stretched out toward the wreath. Goethe wears the formal court dress of the era; Schiller is in ordinary dress.

Four exact copies of Rietschel's statue were subsequently commissioned by German-Americans in the United States for the **Goethe–Schiller monuments** in [San Francisco](#) (1901), [Cleveland](#) (1907), [Milwaukee](#) (1908), and [Syracuse](#) (1911). 65,000 people attended the dedication of the Cleveland monument. A fifth copy of reduced

size was installed in [Anting](#), China, in 2006; Anting New Town is a "German-themed" town near Shanghai that was developed around 2000.

The Weimar monument



1900 photograph of the Goethe-Schiller monument
in front of the Court Theater in Weimar

The project of creating a Goethe-Schiller monument in Weimar was sponsored by [Karl Alexander August Johann](#), the Grand Duke of the [Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach](#) Duchy, and by a citizen's commission. The dedication of the monument was planned to coincide with the centennial celebrations of the birth of the earlier Grand Duke [Karl August](#), who had brought Goethe to Weimar in 1775. Goethe lived most of his adult life there, and Schiller the last six years of his life. The site for the monument was the city square that fronted the [Court Theater](#) (German: *das Hoftheater*) where Goethe was managing director from 1791 to 1815; Goethe later wrote that he had "tried to elevate the masses intellectually with Shakespeare, Gozzi, and Schiller". Goethe arranged for the theater to premiere Schiller's last four plays ([Mary Stuart](#), [The Bride of Messina](#), [The Maid of Orleans](#), and [William Tell](#)). By the time of their monument's dedication in 1857, the theater had seen countless performances of all Schiller's plays.

[Christian Daniel Rauch](#) was invited to prepare a design for a double statue (German: *Doppelstandbild*); Rauch was perhaps the most prominent sculptor working in German-speaking Europe in the first half of the 19th century. Rauch's design has the two men clad in antique dress; while the convention of creating sculptures of heroic figures in antique dress was well established, it was rejected in this case. Ernst Rietschel, another prominent sculptor who had been Rauch's student, made a design with the two men in contemporary dress that was accepted, and a contract was signed with Rietschel in December, 1852.

Rietschel needed four years to complete the full-size model for the statue. The actual casting in bronze was done remarkably quickly by [Ferdinand von Miller](#) at the Royal Foundry in Munich. The finished monument was dedicated on September 4, 1857, as part of the celebrations for the centenary of the birth of Grand Duke [Karl August](#). Hans Pohlsander has written, "The monument was the first double statue on German soil, and was widely, and rightly, proclaimed a masterpiece."

The U.S. monuments



2010 photograph of the electrotyped copper statue
in Syracuse, New York. While the 1857 Weimar
monument is in a city square,
the four US monuments are in parks.

In 1895 in San Francisco, California, the *Goethe-Schiller Denkmal Gesellschaft* (Goethe-Schiller Monument Company) was formed for the purpose of raising a version of the Weimar Monument in [Golden Gate Park](#). Instead of the Munich foundry used to cast the original statue, the foundry in [Lauchhammer](#) was contracted to make a new bronze casting. The molds were prepared from Rietschel's original forms at the [Albertinum](#) in Dresden; the work was supervised by [Rudolf Siemering](#), a Berlin sculptor. The statue was installed on a granite pedestal and steps that closely copied those of the Weimar original. The monument was dedicated on August 11, 1901, with 30,000 people in attendance according to the souvenir book published shortly thereafter. The festivities continued throughout the day and evening.

Three additional monuments based on Rietschel's bronze were raised over the next decade. The Cleveland, Ohio monument in [Wade Park](#) was dedicated on June 9, 1907. [Wilhelm II](#), the German Emperor, sent a congratulatory cable, to which the head of the Goethe-Schiller Memorial Committee responded, "Emperor Wilhelm, Berlin. Goethe-Schiller Memorial unveiled in presence of 65,000 persons. In this sacred hour American citizens of Cleveland of German origin respectfully thank Your Majesty for his good wishes." The Milwaukee, Wisconsin monument in Washington Park was dedicated on June 12, 1908 before 35,000 people. The bronze statues for the Cleveland and Milwaukee monuments had also been cast by the Lauchhammer foundry. The statue for the Syracuse monument is electrotyped copper, and not a bronze casting. It was sited in [Schiller Park](#), which had been renamed in 1905 to honor the centennial of Schiller's death. The monument was dedicated on October 15, 1911.

All of the American monuments were sited in city parks, whereas the Weimar monument is in a city square. As can be seen from the antique postcards, the stonework of the San Francisco, Cleveland, and Syracuse monuments is similar to the Weimar original. The Syracuse monument is on a steep slope, and is distinguished by a formal stone stairway approaching the statue. The Milwaukee monument's stonework is more extensive. The three steps underneath the pedestal in Weimar were widened greatly in the Milwaukee design, and support long stone walls and benches on both flanks of the pedestal and sculpture; access to the back of the monument rear is reduced correspondingly.

19th-century contexts

German lands in Europe

The commissioning of Rietschel's Goethe-Schiller statue had one clear motivation: to honor Weimar's famous poets and their patron; indeed, Schiller and Goethe had been entombed, along with Grand Duke Karl August, in the **ducal burial chapel** (the *Fürstengruft*) in Weimar. A second motivation may have been to increase "culture tourism" to the city, which had a claim as the "Athens on the **Ilm**". The statue was nonetheless part of a wider, essentially popular movement in mid-19th-century Germany. **Ute Frevert** has summarized the program of speakers at its dedication: "Unlike the Grand Duke, who wanted to harness the ceremony to the cart of dynastic legitimation, the bourgeois speakers transformed it into a national celebration at which the 'German people' paid homage to its 'heroes'". In the mid-19th century, the German-speaking population in Europe was divided between many, mostly small countries. Paul Zanker has written of this movement:

After the wars of liberation in German lands had brought neither political freedom nor national unity, the citizenry began to seek in cultural pursuits a substitute for what they still lacked. For example, they erected monuments to intellectual giants, usually at the most conspicuous place in the city, an honor that until then had been reserved for princes and military men. ... There arose a true cult of the monument, which included broadsheets, picture books, and luxury editions of "collected works". With all this activity, the Germans began to see themselves, *faute de mieux*, as "the people of poets and thinkers." This is especially true of the period of the

Postcards of the monuments



Weimar, Germany (1857)



San Francisco, California (1901)



Cleveland, Ohio (1907)



Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1908)



Syracuse, New York (1911)

restoration, and in particular, the years after the failed revolution of 1848, when monuments to famous Germans, above all Friedrich von Schiller, sprouted everywhere.

By 1859, the centenary of Schiller's birth and the occasion for 440 celebrations in German lands, Schiller had emerged as the "poet of freedom and unity" for German citizens. Ute Frevert writes, "It did not matter who spoke, a Hamburg plumber, a political emigrant in Paris, an aristocratic civil servant in Münster, a writer in Wollenbüttel, they unanimously invoked Schiller as a singer of freedom and the prophet of German unity." Rüdiger Görner illustrates the origins of this reputation with a speech from the "famous" tenth scene of the third act of Schiller's 1787 play, *Don Carlos*: "Look all around at nature's mastery, / Founded on freedom. And how rich it grows, / Feeding on freedom."

[Wolf Lepenies](#) takes a similar perspective, writing that "After the revolution of 1848 failed, Schiller became more popular, as the festivities for his hundredth birthday in 1859 demonstrated; the occasion was celebrated throughout the German lands in a mood of patriotic fervor. Two years earlier, the Goethe–Schiller monument had been erected in Weimar, but only after the Prussian victory over France in the war of 1870—1871 did it become a national place of worship."

German-America

Between 1830 and 1900, about 4 million immigrants came to the United States from German countries in Europe; this amounted to about a 7% emigration from German countries and a 7% immigration into the United States.^[27] In the United States, German immigrants often settled in fairly unpopulated areas near the Great Lakes, and the percentage of German immigrants and their children reached 40% in some regions. As one example, in 1885 about 17% of Wisconsin's population of some 1.6 million people had been born in Germany. With their children, an estimate was that 31% of the state's population was either German-born, or the children of two German-born parents. Wisconsin's major city, Milwaukee, had been dubbed "the German Athens in America".

Many of these [German-American communities](#) worked assiduously to preserve German language and culture, and Schiller "was the best expression of that side of German character which most qualified the German despite his distinctiveness to become a true American citizen". [Phyllida Lloyd](#), a recent director of Schiller's plays, has said "During the Civil War, and this was complete news to me, a quarter of a million German-born soldiers were fighting for Lincoln. Many of them were carrying Schiller in their knapsacks."

By the late 19th century, German-Americans were participating in the monument-building movement of German-speaking Europe. At the 1901 dedication of the first US Goethe–Schiller monument, C. M. Richter remarked:

The German, who brought these two masters as his inheritance to a new homeland, contributed this wealth to the intellectual life of his fellow citizens. Never has a genius demonstrated the worth of virtue, the triumph of freedom, and the noble heart of patriotism with more eloquence and ardor than Schiller. This spiritual treasure of

Germans is the most beautiful and precious dowry with which he could bind himself to his adoptive fatherland, and it was well-done to put it into service with a monument. Richter's speech and many others at the dedication were actually delivered in German.

By 1901, monuments to Schiller had already been erected in [New York](#) (1859), [Philadelphia](#) (1886), [Chicago](#) (1886), [Columbus](#) (1891), and [St. Louis](#) (1898). The Chicago and St. Louis monuments were recastings of [Ernst Rau's 1876 bronze](#) located in [Marbach, Germany](#), where Schiller was born in 1759. A monument to Goethe had also been erected in Philadelphia (1891–[Heinrich Manger](#)). By 1914 and the outbreak of World War I, eight additional monuments to Schiller had been erected in the US. Four were the double monuments to Goethe and to Schiller. Four monuments to Schiller alone were raised (in [Omaha](#) (1905), [St. Paul](#) (1907), [Rochester](#) (1907), and [Detroit](#) (1908)). An additional [monument to Goethe](#) had been built in Chicago (1914). This monument, by [Hermann Hahn](#), shows an idealized figure often identified with Zeus; it signaled a profound departure from sculptures that were recognizable portraits of the poets. Overall, the monument-building enthusiasm in German-America had been at least as great as in German-speaking Europe. Thirteen monuments to Schiller had been erected in the US, and 24 were erected by the much larger German-speaking population in Europe.

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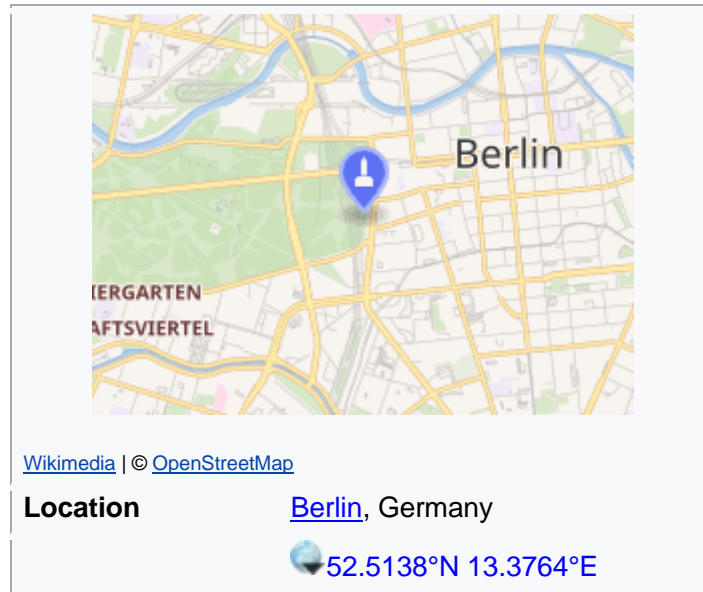
Goethe Monument (Berlin)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goethe_Monument_\(Berlin\)#:~:text=The%20Goethe%20Monument%20\(German%3A%20Das,and%20Amor\)%2C%20and%20Science.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goethe_Monument_(Berlin)#:~:text=The%20Goethe%20Monument%20(German%3A%20Das,and%20Amor)%2C%20and%20Science.)

Goethe Monument



The memorial in 2011



The **Goethe Monument** ([German](#): *Das Goethe-Denkmal*) is an outdoor 1880 memorial to German writer and statesman [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#) by [Fritz Schaper](#), located in [Tiergarten](#) in [Berlin](#), Germany. The sculpture's base depicts the [allegorical figures](#) of Drama, Lyric Poetry (and Amor), and Science.

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Philosophical Influence

<https://iep.utm.edu/goethe/#H6>

Goethe's general influence on European culture is gargantuan. In 19th century Germany alone, authors like Heine, Novalis, Jean Paul, Tieck, Hoffman, and Eichendorff all owe tremendous debts to *Götz* and *Werther*. Thomas Carlyle, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Mark Twain, Kurt Tucholsky, Thomas Mann, James Joyce and too many others to name have since paid tribute to the master from Weimar. Composers like Mozart, Liszt, and Mahler dedicated works to Goethe's drama, while Beethoven himself mused that the greatest musical accomplishment possible would be a perfect musical expression *Faust*. Goethe's ideas have truly launched a thousand ships upon their cultural and intellectual expeditions. Philosophically, the lineage is comparatively more defined.

In his mature years, Goethe was to witness the philosophical focus in Germany shift from Kant to the Idealists. But by the early 1800s, Goethe was too

convinced of the worth of his own ideas to be much influenced by what he considered philosophical fashions. Despite his proximity to and considerable influence at the University of Jena, Goethe had little positive contact with Fichte (1762-1814), who arrived there in 1794. Neither Fichte's Pecksniffian sermonizing nor nearly illegible compositional style would have endeared him personally to the poet. Goethe's more ambivalent attitude toward [Schelling](#) (1775-1854) vacillated between an approval of his appreciation for the deep mysteriousness of nature and an aversion to his futile attempt to solve it by means of an abstracted and artificial system. Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*, like Goethe's morphology, views nature as a constant organic development. But where Goethe saw polarity as an essential part of growth, Schelling understood dualities generally as something to be overcome in the intuition of the 'absolute'.

Goethe's relationship with Hegel (1770-1831) was both more direct and more influential. Most overtly, Hegel's logic draws upon Goethe's conception of metamorphosis. A letter from Hegel to Goethe on February 20, 1821 reads:

The simple and abstract, what you quite aptly call the archetypal phenomenon, this you put first, and then show the concrete phenomena as arising through the participation of still other influences and circumstances, and you direct the whole process in such a way that the sequence proceeds from the simple determining factors to the composite ones, and, thus arranged, something complex appears in all its clarity through this decomposition. To seek out the archetypal phenomenon, to free it from other extraneous chance surroundings — to grasp it abstractly, as we call it — this I consider to be a task for a great spiritual sense for nature, just as I consider that procedure altogether to be what is truly scientific in gaining knowledge in this field.

For Hegel, famously, a natural object has achieved its greatest perfection when it brings forth its full implicit content in explicit conceptual representation. Because the intellectual world ranks higher than the material, a phenomenology of the whole must observe the gradual unfolding of all possible logical forms from mere sense certainty through the self-recognition of consciousness to absolute knowing. To no small degree, Hegel's criticism of Kant's lifeless schematism of the understanding was foreshadowed by Goethe, who wrote, "Reason has to do with becoming, understanding with what has become. The former does not bother with the question, 'what use?'; the latter does not ask 'whence?'. Reason takes pleasure in development; understanding wishes to hold everything fixed so that it can exploit it," (Goethe 1907, 555). Hegel's formulation of *Begriff*, which designates the inner plan of the development of an object, was not wholly unlike Goethe's *Urphänomen* (see below). The Hegelian dialectic, as an unveiling the

movement of the concept would then correspond to the morphology. The problem, for Goethe, was that Hegel's attempt to articulate wholeness began by the analysis of the logical concept of Being in the *Logik* and by the sublimation of the sense-certain observation of natural objects in the *Phänomenologie*, which for Goethe unjustifiably overlooks precisely that which it was the task of science to understand: the development of the natural forms of life, of which the mind is certainly a central one, but indeed only one example. As Goethe writes in a letter to Soret on February 13, 1829, "Nature is always true, always serious, always severe; it is always right, and mistakes and errors are always the work of men." Similar to his critique of Kant, then, Goethe accused Hegel of creating a grand and abstract system to explain a phenomenon which in both ordinary life and in scientific observation could simply be assumed. Nature presents itself to the epistemologically reflective and to the naïve equally and without preference.

Arthur Schopenhauer's (1788-1860) mother Johanna became fast friends with Goethe and his lover Christiane Vulpius when she moved to Weimra in 1804. His sister Adele was the lifelong confidant of Ottilie Pogwisch, who married Goethe's and Christiane's son Auguste. But for the young Arthur, due in part to an unavoidable clash of personalities, the established Goethe had little patience. Goethe recognized his intelligence early on, but declined to provide him a letter of recommendation to the university at Göttingen and offered him only a tepid letter of introduction to the classicist Friedrich August Wolf in Berlin. Schopenhauer's dissertation, however, interested Goethe very much. In the winter of 1813-4, Goethe and Schopenhauer were engaged in extensive philosophical conversation concerning the former's anti-Newtonian *Farbenlehre* (see below), out of which grew the latter's *Über das Sehen und die Farben* in 1815. When Schopenhauer sent him the manuscript in the hopes of a recommendation, he grew impatient with the elder's reticence to take his efforts sufficiently seriously. In truth, Schopenhauer's work largely revealed Goethe's as a failed attempt to overcome Newtonian visual theory, a fact which wounded Goethe deeply. Goethe followed Schopenhauer's career with interest, however, and generally praised *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*. It remains a question, though, whether Goethe ever read the book carefully since scant reference to its ideas can be found.

Like that of his *Erzieher* Schopenhauer, [Nietzsche's](#) (1844-1900) relationship with Goethe's thought was deeply ambivalent. Nietzsche often admired Goethe as emblematic of a healthy, fully-formed individual. Goethe is said to be "the last German for whom I feel reverence," (Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man," section 51). Nietzsche's early contention that the tragic age of culture began only with the fortuitous interaction of the Apollonian and Dionysian drives bears a similarity to Goethe's classical

understanding of art as a tensional polarity between the blindly creative will and the constraint of formal rules. Yet Nietzsche takes Goethe to task for having invested too much in Winckelmann's attribution of '*Heiterkeit*' to classical antiquity and thereby for having ignored its deeply irrational underside. Moreover, Nietzsche's ontology, if indeed he had one, is like Goethe's in its rejection of static atomic substances and in its attempt to conceive an intrinsically agonistic process of becoming as the true character of the world. Similar, too, to Goethe's 'intensification' principle, Nietzsche's notoriously ambiguous 'Will to Power' characterizes the dynamic process by which entities 'become what they are' by struggling against oppositional limitations that are at the same time the necessary condition for growth. Due to this shared ontological outlook, Goethe and Nietzsche both thought contemporary science was constricted by an outdated conception of substance and, as a result, mechanistic modes of explanation should be reformulated to account for the dynamic character of nature. Despite these commonalities, Nietzsche jettisoned Goethe's *Bildungstrieb* for an overarching drive—not to expression or growth within formal constraint—but for overcoming, for power.

Finally, [Wittgenstein](#)'s (1889-1951) claim that things which cannot be put into propositional form might nevertheless be shown bears a family resemblance to Goethe's formulation of the *daimonisch*. But where Wittgenstein removes the proverbial ladder on which he ascends to his intuitions about the relation between logic and the world, thereby reducing what cannot be bound by the rules of logic as nonsensical, Goethe believed he could communicate what were admittedly ineffable *Urphänomene* in a non-propositional way, through the feelings evoked by drama. There is, moreover, a distinct similarity in Goethe's and Wittgenstein's views on the proper task of philosophy. Its aim, for both, can never be accomplished, once and for all, by means of 'the right argument'. Argumentation, explanation, and demonstration only go so far in their attempt to unravel the mysteries of the world. "Philosophy simply puts everything before us; it fails to deduce anything," (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 126).

Philosophy's role in our life should guide us to be reflective people, ever ready to critique inherited dogmas, and always ready to revise our hypotheses in light of new observations. Goethe, through his ceaseless energy, limitless fascination with the world as it was presented to him, and his perpetual willingness to test his convictions against new evidence, carries a timeless appeal to philosophers, not because he demonstrated or explained what it meant to live philosophically, but because, through the example of the course of his life, he showed it.

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GOETHE

As a Poet

{<https://poets.org/poet/johann-wolfgang-von-goethe>}

Born in Frankfurt, Germany, on August 28, 1749, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was tutored extensively in languages as a child. Goethe's father, a lawyer, prioritized his son's education, enabling him to engage in many literary and cultural pursuits. Goethe was fascinated by writers such as Homer and Ovid, and committed whole passages of these texts to heart.

Goethe's love for poetry persisted through his legal training, and he anonymously released *Annette*, his first collection of poems, in 1770. By the time he completed his studies, he had composed a satirical crime comedy, fallen in love with folk poetry, and developed a deep affinity for Shakespeare, the figure responsible for what he termed his "personal awakening."

Throughout the 1770s, Goethe practiced a unique, progressive version of law across Germany, while maintaining a side career as an editor, playwright, and poet. He wrote his first widely-read novel, the loosely-autobiographical, joyfully-romantic tragedy, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, in 1774, at the age of twenty-four. The book was an instant international success. Napoleon Bonaparte called it one of the greatest works of European Literature. It sparked the phenomenon "Werther-Fieber" ("Werther Fever"), in which young men throughout Europe began dressing like the tragic protagonist, and brought Goethe to the court of Karl August, Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, where he would become an important advisor. In later years, Goethe expressed his disgust with the novel and the romantic genre out of which it emerged; however, its effect on Goethe's career and public image were undeniable.

Goethe met the poet and playwright Friedrich Schiller in 1794, beginning a collaborative relationship that would result in a creative success for both artists. The two transformed the Weimar Theatre into a national treasure, and their cumulative writings form the heart of German literature, having also been adapted by many composers such as Mozart and Beethoven. Goethe wrote extensively during this period, including his *Roman Elegies*, a seductive twenty-four-poem cycle about his trip to Italy, but it was not until after Schiller's death in 1805 that he produced his most famous work, *Faust*, about a duel with the devil in the search for transcendent knowledge. The

epic poem-as-play has been adapted into an opera and is still performed throughout the world.

Despite his success and influence as a poet, Goethe expressed that he took no pride in his literary accomplishments, and believed instead that his work as a philosopher and scientist—in particular his theories about color—would be his true legacy. However, his writings—emotive, far-reaching, prophetic, and formal—stimulated generations of Western literature and thought. Randall Jarrell, who translated Faust from his poet laureate's office at the Library of Congress, called him his "own favorite daemon, dear good great Goethe." Ralph Waldo Emerson, deeply influenced by Goethe's merging of science and art, called Goethe the "surpassing intellect of modern times," and said of his life:

Such was his capacity, that the magazines of the world's ancient or modern wealth, which arts and intercourse and skepticism could command, —he wanted them all. Had there been twice so much, he could have used it as well. Geologist, mechanic, merchant, chemist, king, radical, painter, composer, —all worked for him, and a thousand men seemed to look through his eyes. He learned as readily as other men breathe. Of all the men of this time, not one has seemed so much at home in it as he. He was not afraid to live.

Goethe died in Weimar on March 22, 1832. He is buried in the Ducal Vault at Weimar's Historical Cemetery.

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